

A  
NARRATIVE  
Panegyrical

Of the Life, Sickneſs, and Death,

OF

GEORGE,

By Divine Providence, *m. 152.*

Lord Biſhop of DERRY

IN

IRELAND:

As it was delivered at his Funerals in  
the Cathedral Church of the *Holy Trinity*  
(commonly called *Chriſt Church*) in *Dublin*,  
on Friday the 12<sup>th</sup> of *January*,  
*Anno Domini 1661.*

By *R. Moſſon*, D. D. and Dean of the ſaid  
Cathedral Church.

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*St. Pauls Church-yard*. 1661.





A Narrative Panegyrical of the Life,  
Sickness, and Death, of George Lord  
Bishop of Derry; who departed this life  
at Dublin, on Friday the 29<sup>th</sup> day of De-  
cember, Anno Domini 1666<sup>6</sup>.

Men, Brethren, and Fathers,



IN Conformity to the ancient  
practice of the Primitive  
Saints, and the continued  
Custom of Christs Church,  
we are here met in this present  
Congregation, to perform the Funeral Rights  
due to the Body and the Memory of the  
Right Reverend Father in God, George, by  
Divine Providence, Lord Bishop of Derry,  
lately deceased. A Bishop he was by Divine  
Ordination; Lord Bishop, by Royal Com-  
mission. This our *Elisba's* double Mantle of  
Honor; To well consistent are these two, A

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Lord

Lord Spiritual, and the Spirit of the Lord; which Spirit of the Lord, may make the Honor immortal, and yet not the Person. For that, whereas Men of high Dignity, either in Church or State, are (for their Light and Influence) aptly called *Stars*; I may say of the Right Reverend Personage, whose Funerals we celebrate: I may say of him in a better sense than *Lipsius* did of *Origen*, *Stella, utinam non caduca!* A Star he was, I wish he had not been a falling one! But why should I thus wish? seeing he is advanced by his fall; for in an happy exchange of Mortality for Glory, this Star is become fixt, fixt in the Firmament of Heaven, the Society of the Blessed; leaving behinde him on Earth, the character of *O μακάριος*, for that he was a Blessed Assertor of Loyalty; a Blessed Champion of the Faith; a Blessed Patron of the Poor; a Blessed Father of the Church; and therefore now a Blessed Saint in Heaven: The memory of whose name shall be venerable to all Posterity in the *Annals* of the *Churches Worthies*.

Waving what might be said of his ingenious

nious Education; his Academical Degrees; and those esteems in *Oxford*, which brought him to *Lambeth*: Made Domestick Chaplain to the then Lord Archbishop of *Canterbury*, lately Martyred; of whom, in the Church, and in the Tower; he had a Pre-  
sident suitable to his Principles, of being actively zealous, and patiently resolute in the Kings Cause, and in the Churches Service: Waving all these, I begin my Commemorations of him, where I first began mine Acquaintance with him; and that was, not long after the Death of *Charles* the First, King and Martyr.

Our first meeting was in the Fiery Furnace of the Churches Persecutions (and of those things I may speak the more knowingly, *Quorum magna pars fui*, as having then a great share with him in those Sufferings) though indeed such was the Power of Divine Providence, restraining the fury of those Flames, that they scorched not his Garments, nor an Hair of his Head perished; notwithstanding he stood in the face of the then prevailing Factions, and was daily threatned with Sur-  
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prize and Imprisonment. For some years, he hovered, like *Noah's Dove*, over the Waters of Confusion ; sometimes Preaching in the Countrey, and sometimes in the City ; sometimes in private , and sometimes in publick, as he found opportunity offered to promote Piety, and perswade Loyalty : At length Divine Providence receives the Dove into the Ark ; an House is provided near *Fleetstreet* in *London*, and in the House an *ὑπερῶν*, an upper Room is prepared , after the manner of Primitive Devotion ; which upper Room becomes an Oratory, fitted for the Preaching of the Word, and Administring the Sacraments, with a constant use of the Publick *Liturgy* of the Church.

And here I cannot but recount with joy, amidst all this Funeral Sorrow , what were then the holy ardors of all fervent Devotions, in Fastings, and Prayer, and Solemn Humiliations ; Ay, in Festival and Sacramental Solemnities. O the lift-up praying ; and yet sometimes down-cast weeping eyes of humble Penitents ! O the often extended, and yet as often enfolded arms of suppliant Votaries!

Votaries ! Upon days of Solemnity, O how early, and how eager were the Peoples devotions ! that certainly, then, if ever, the Kingdom of Heaven suffered Violence ; so many, with *Jacob*, wrestling with God in Prayer, not letting him go till he gave them a Blessing ; and no Blessing would answer the importunity of all these, but that Sovereign Blessing of these Kingdoms and Churches ; a King restored to His Throne, and that King, *Charles* the Second ; restoring with His Throne, both Churches and Kingdoms. And now the Shepherd which kept this Flock, even in the midst of Wolves ; that Priest that then served at the Altar, amidst all the variety of State Confusions, Instructing, Supporting, and Encouraging, by Precept, by Pattern, and by Prayer, it was *Dr. George Wilde*, afterwards by Divine Providence Lord Bishop of *Derry*, the Personage deceased.

And whereas some good *Obadiahs* did then hide and feed the Lords Prophets, it was his care to communicate to others relief, what himself received for his own support.

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Many Ministers Sequestred, many Widows Afflicted, many Royalists Imprisoned, and almost Famished, can testifie the diffusive bounty of his hand, dispensing to others in reliefs of Charity, what himself received of others in Offerings of Devotion.

Notwithstanding that Wing of Providence which was over him for his protection, yet did he sometime suffer Surprise and Imprisonment; but *Nubecula fuit, cito transiit*, it was a small cloud and soon passed over; and if at any time the Persecution was so hotly pursued, that his mouth for a while was stopt, yet even then, (as Maldonat says of *John Baptist*, that *Miraculum non fecit, magnum fuit*; *John* indeed did no miracle, yet was he himself a great Miracle) so may I say of this then Loyal Doctor, *Concionem non fecit, magna fuit*; when he Preached no Sermon, yet was he himself in the pattern of Patience and Piety, a good Sermon.

After this, when His Majesties safe Return (the Universal joy of these three Kingdoms) did at once open the Subjects hearts, and the Churches doors to Loyalty, and the Liturgy

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together ; then did the deceased leave his private Oratory, in exchange for the publick Temple. And sure I am, such was the strength of his merit and interest, as could undoubtedly have procured him preferment in *England*, equal to that he had in *Ireland*: Yet this I know, when he had in his deliberate choice, whether to accept of the Bishoprick of *Derry*, or some other of equal Dignity, that which would have been the Argument of anothers refusal, was the very reason of his choice, even the difficulty of the service ; as zealously intending what might promote not so much his Dignity, as Gods glory ; not so much his advantage, as the Churches good ; or rather indeed, in the Churches good, seeking his best advantage, as having an eye (with *Moses*) to the recompence of reward.

And now beholding him taking his leave of his *London*-friends, in his farewel design for *Derry*, methinks I see *St. Paul* encompassed with those devoted ones of the Church of *Ephesus*, taking his farewel bound for *Jerusalem* (*Acts* 20.) Some are sighing,  
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some are weeping, all are sorrowing; Sorrowing for this especially, that they believed they should see his face no more. Sure, the good Man did here undergo an hard tryal, much like that of *St. Pauls*: And had he not had an Heroick Piety, cheerfully to encounter difficulties and dangers, he had certainly been entangled with his friends embraces; but his love to Souls brings him to *Derry*, where he hath left this testimony of honorable fame, That he was faithful in his office to God, the King, and the Church. In his constant Preaching, he fed the Peoples Souls, and not their Humors; and in his Pastoral Discipline, he struck at their Pertinacy, not their Persons. He did *edificare*, but not *in ruinam* (in the words of *Tertullian*) he did edifie, but not to ruine, as do too many with their edifying Sermons (falsly so called) who teach Sedition and Schism, under the mask of Religion and Zeal, which the more home they Preach, the more hurt they do.

This we too sadly know, the deceased Bishop, Taper-like, consumed himself to give light to others; so that, to all contemners of  
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his Ministry, and opposers of his Pastoral charge; to them, I say, Behold, not the dust of his feet, but even the carcase of his body is cast off against you. For, for your sakes it was that his heart became troubled with cares, and his spirit wasted with studies, and thereby his body the sooner brought to its Grave.

After, almost, five years continuance in his Episcopal charge, as the duty of his place, in service to the King and Church did require, he repairs to *Dublin* to attend the sitting again of the Parliament, in which himself was a Peer; and at his entrance into the City, he brought death in his face, which not long after seized his heart; some sensible decays he had, to which his sprightly *Genius* would not stoop, but bore up with chearfulness till *Christmas Eve*, intending the service of Pulpit and Altar, of Sermon, and Sacrament, at *St. Brides* on *Christmas-day*, and sitting up late in preparation for that intended Service, he was seized with the first *Paroxysme* of his sickness, as a summons of Death, who now laid siege to the Cittadel of his Heart.

And thus though he died not standing in the Pulpit, yet he died studying of the Sermon ; and blessed is that servant, whom his Lord, when he cometh, shall finde so doing. He was then upon his duty and guard, when by Death encountred ; which encounter hath thus far onely prevailed, to a conquest over the outward man : His pious Soul being on the Friday following , translated by the ministry of Angels from the Militant state of *Christs Church* ou Earth , to that state which is Triumphant in Heaven.

Now before we close, give me leave to reflect a while in some pertinent observations upon the Life, and Sicknes, and Death of the deceased. ( 1. ) In a review, reflecting upon his Life, I observe, his days were like the Suns revolution, in a continued sphear of heavenly vertues : And that to give you a Summary of his Religious conversation, were to do with Christian piety, what *Florus* did with the *Roman History*, *In brevitabella totam ejus imaginem amplecti*, draw its full Portraicture in a short Table ; for indeed he was no Mercurial Statue, to point out

out the way, and not walk it himself; no, but rather he was like the Angelical Star, at the Birth of *Christ*, which declared *Christ* born to the *Magi*, and went along with them to him; *Kαὶ ἔδειξε αὐτοῖς ὁδὸν*, in the words of *St. Basil* (on *Psal. 63.*) He was a Preacher in Life, as well as in Doctrine; in Pattern, as well as in Precept.

Again, I observe, such were his frequent Fastings and Prayers, that wheresoever he did reside, if he had not time and place, opportunity and conveniency for Gods publick Worship, he either made his Chamber a Chappel, or the House a Temple; the Churches Prayers being still a part of his constant Devotions.

Again, I observe, his Charity that was greatly diffusive, even into all the Three Kingdoms, having his poor Widows, his necessitous Gentlemen, young Schollars, and puny Catechists, all his continued Pensioners; some in *London*, some in *Cambridge*, some in *Oxford*, some in *Dublin*, some at *Glasgow*, some at *Derry*, some at *Faugben*; indeed,

indeed, what place did he ever come into, or could well send into, that did not taste some influence of his bounty? The whole sum of his Charity (besides the charge of his Buildings) hath been computed by them that best know it, 500 *l. per annum*. And observe, that which speaks his goodness hugely ingenuous, when he gave any thing of his Purse, in a contribution of Charity, he gave something also of himself in a compassionate pity; ay, and something of his Office too, in a Benediction or Prayer.

In the Will which he made, there are indeed many Legacies, but none to gratifie the rich, most to relieve the necessitous; some indeed are Honorary, such as that of his giving to the Library of *St. Johns* Colledge in *Oxford*; many of his best *Folio's*, with an 100 *l.* towards the building their Founders Tomb: Ay, and that his Charity might not die with him, he desires in his Will, that what could be spared from the charge of his Funerals (which he ordered to be decent and not pompous) might be disposed of for the relief of the poor. Thus the deceased dy-

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ing in the Lord, rests from his labors, and his works follow him : So that great no doubt, is his gain in Heaven, who is entred into the joy of his Lord ; but sure I am, great is ours, and the Churches loss on Earth, which thousands in both Kingdoms do bewail ; His number of endeared Friends, out-  
 vying that of most mens common acquaintance. O how many are ready to say of him, taken from them by Death, what St. Jerome said of *Nepotian*, *O, avulsa sunt viscera mea !* O, my Bowels are torn from me ! Ay, in a louder accent of sorrow ; how many are there (poor Souls) who cry out, *Avulsa sunt alimenta mea !* Oh, my Bread, my Food, and so my Life is taken from me by his Death ! Such was their maintenance and supplies administred from his hand of Bounty and Love.

And observe, what is not to be buried in silence, his devotions so zealous, were all a Vestal Flame, a Virgin Piety, not defiled with the ravishments of the Flesh, or the impurities of the World; he had espoused himself to Christ, and therefore engaged in no



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no other marriage, then that of his Soul, in love to Jesus, according to that which was his frequent and fervent ejaculation, *O bone Jesu, esto mihi Jesus!* O good Jesu, be thou a Jesus to me!

Here then away with that scandalous reproach cast upon Episcopacy by Schism and Sedition, as if forsooth, by some strange enchantment and charm, to be made Lord Bishop, were to unmake a good Man, and a good Minister. Here we see that scandalous reproach perfectly confuted, and were it not too too impudent, this and many other deceased Presidents, as well as other surviving examples might wholly silence it. Sure I am, beyond all contradiction, we have seen Dr. *Wilde*, and the Bishop of *Derry*, one and the same in Piety, in Charity, in diligent Preaching, holy Living, hospitable House-keeping, and all other the commendable qualifications of a good Man, and a good Bishop.

To draw to a close, reflect we upon the last scene of all his Labors, his Sickness, and Death; know then, he having received, not  
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long before, the Blessed Sacrament of the holy Eucharist, his preparation for death was no sick-bed task ; and therefore did he rather meet his dissolution, then flie it. He was none of those θαύματα ἀνθρώπων, those strange sort of men μήτε ζῆν θέλοντες μήτε ἀποδηήσκειν----.

He lived as one expecting Death, and died as one assured of Life. He felt no *retinacula animæ*, no pull-backs of the Soul, to hold him from Christ, either from love of enjoying the World, or fear of leaving it : So that being in firm Peace of Conscience, and full Hope of Glory, when I minded him of the approaches of Death, he did with much *Pathos* of Devotion, utter that our Saviours prescribed Petition, *Thy will be done in Earth, as it is in Heaven.* Ay, *Thy will, O God, be done* (says he) *In hac terra mea*——*This my Earthly Body*, smiting upon his Brest.

Again, quickning his Devotion from the Mystery of the Churches Festival, Christ come in the Flesh, as being come the desire of all Nations, he pathetically broke forth in a pious descant upon the Prophets words concerning the Messiah, Hag. 2. 7. That he

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was *Desideratus cunctis Gentibus, desiderium omnium Gentium, & summe desiderabilis*, evidencing by the *Pathos* of his expressions, That Christ was indeed the cheif desire and delight of his Soul: Which holy Flame was kept alive on the Altar of his Heart, in continually renewed Devotions, till his prevailing sickness closing his Breath, the holy Flame mounted up with his Soul to Heaven, there to become Seraphick in Glory.

Thus (God having granted what he so earnestly desired, his sense and understanding quick unto the last) in a sweet *εὐφρασία* indeed, this servant of the Lord did depart in peace, without any struglings of Body, or of Soul (*In articulo mortis*, in the minute of his dissolution) as having already begun his eternal rest. And well it is I am come to his rest; I question else where I could have stopt, being carried away with love and zeal upon so dear a Subject.

But now I am at a pause, I remember well we are to perform Funeral Rites due to the Body, as well as the Memory of the deceased; so that I will onely add this, As for you, who  
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are his Friends (and who is not a friend to so eminent a Vertue and Goodness, so excellent a Piety and Charity?) Let me prompt you to this service, and I shall readily comply with you in the performance, that our Hearts and Affections may make him a Tomb, and our Lives in imitation write the Epitaph; and if you please, let the Inscription be, those words of the Apostle, *Christ is our Life*; And so, *when Christ who is our life, shall appear, then shall we also appear with him in glory.*

*Halleluiah.*

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**FINIS.**